technical, financial, commercial and legal matters with a view to mitigating risks and ensuring a "safe and secure world class project" on the basis of international best practice. The advisers are expected to submit their reports to the Governments concerned later this year, on the basis of which Government will take a considered view about the structure of the project as also the nature and extent of our participation in it. Since the proposed project would be conceived and developed on the basis of international best practice, its viability and security would be founded on consensual and legally enforceable agreements in line with established international precedents, between the various national and commercial parties concerned, all of which taken together would have the intended effect of mitigating risk. The next meeting of JWG is likely to be held in Pakistan in September, 2005.

(c) to (e) The pipeline proposal is at initial stage of discussion. These issues would be addressed at appropriate time.

Statement

Relevant extracts from the Joint Press Statement issued by the Petroleum Ministers of India and Pakistan in Islamabad on 7.6.2005

Iran-Pakistan-India Pipeline: The two Ministers reviewed the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipelines proposal. They agreed that the project, which envisaged supply of gas to Pakistan and India through a transnational pipeline, would go a long way in meeting the energy security requirements of the two countries and, thus, should be seen as a significant project for the benefit of the people of these countries. The Indian and Pakistani delegations agreed to exchange information in regard to the financial structuring, technical, commercial, legal and related issues to realize a safe and secure world class project. To this end, it was agreed that the momentum pertaining to the project should be accelerated by constituting a Joint Working Group at the Secretary-level, which will meet regularly and report progress to the Ministers to facilitate definitive decisions by them, at the earliest.

Exploration of coal bed methane

2902. SHRI CHITTABRATA MAJUMDAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the expected time of commercial availability of coal bed methane for industrial use from Raniganj and Jharia blocks by ONGC;

(b) the present status of exploration; and

(c) the quantum of investment made in these blocks so far?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Commercial production in the Raniganj Coal Bed Methane (CBM) block, which is currently at the exploration stage will depend on the results of exploration and appraisal, which are expected to be completed by 2011.

In Jharia block, which is also in the exploration stage, the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) are planning to produce CBM from a part of the block by 2007.

(b) In Raniganj block, ONGC have drilled seven bore holes and are expected to drill eight more bore holes and one exploratory well during the exploration phase.

In Jharia block, ONGC have already drilled nine bore holes and four exploratory wells. The drilling of two bore holes is at present in progress. Three more bore holes and two exploratory wells have been planned.

(c) In Jharia block, ONGC have as of 31.3.05 made an investment of Rs. 1.71 crores following the award of block under the CBM contract regime. Taking into account the pre-contract expenditure made by ONGC, the cumulative investment has been Rs. 54.03 crores as on 31.3.2005. In Raniganj block, ONGC had invested Rs. 0.29 crores until 31.3.2005. Taking into account the pre-contract expenditure made by ONGC, the cumulative investment in this block has been Rs. 36.11 crores as on 31.3.2005.

Plant level Advisory Committee

†2903. SHRI RAMADHAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the plant level Advisory Committee in all undertakings has been constituted for the development of those subsidiary industries

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.